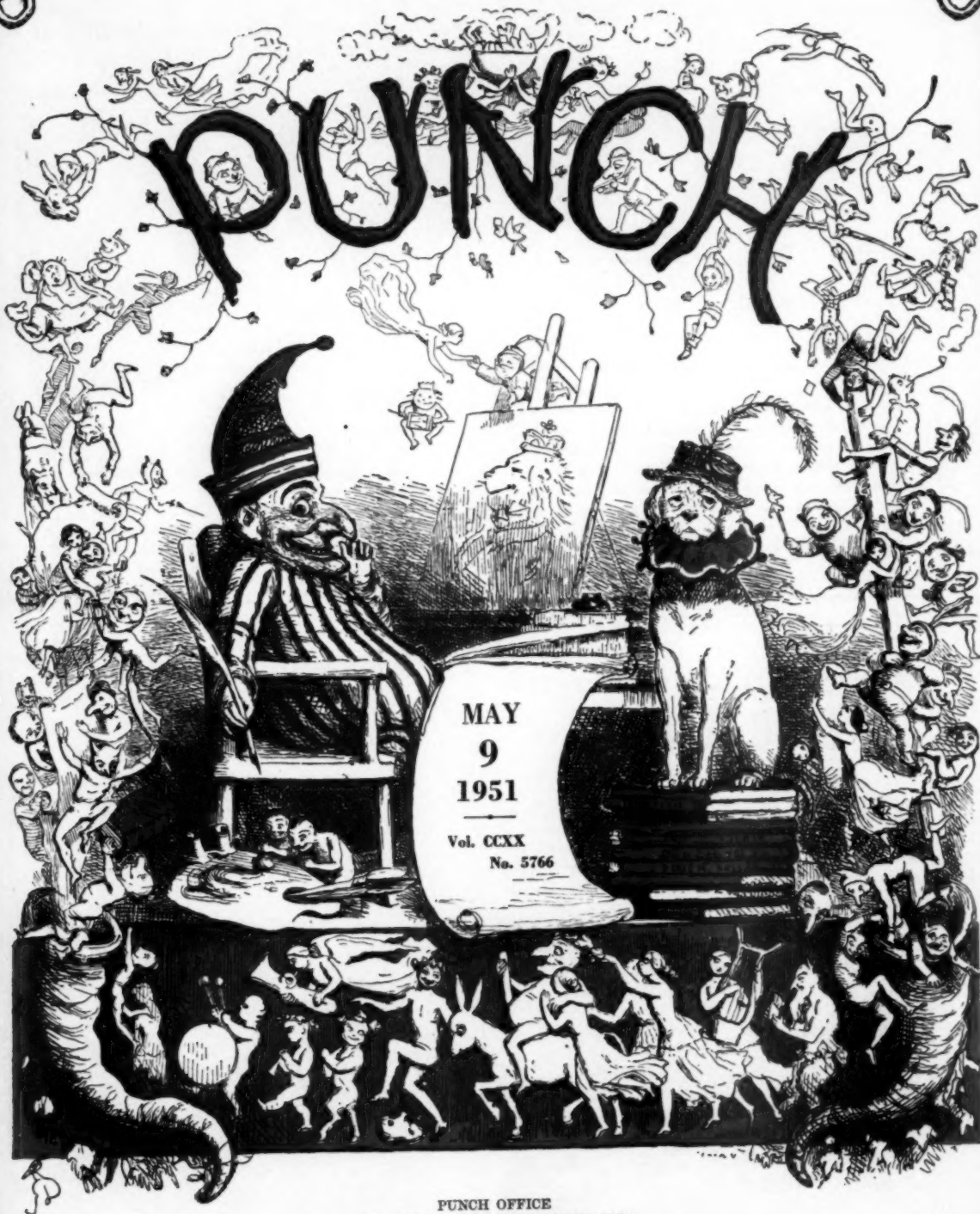
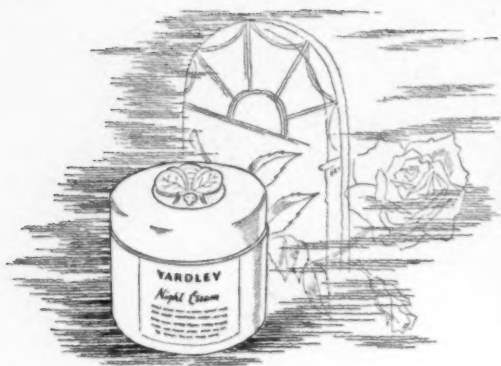


6<sup>d</sup>

PUNCH OR THE LONDON CHARTER—WEDNESDAY, MAY 9 1951

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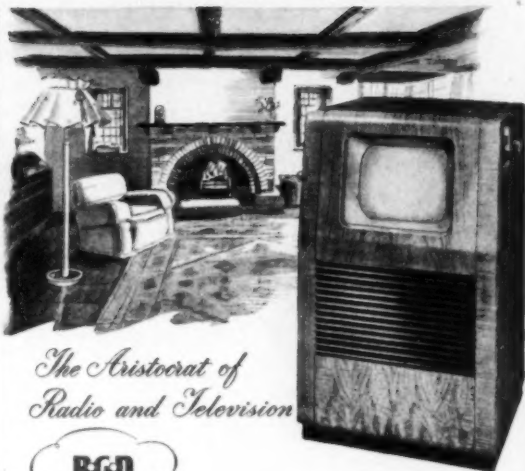
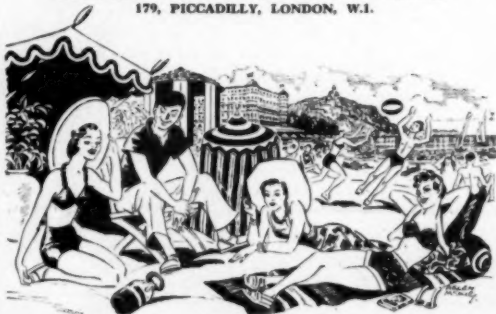
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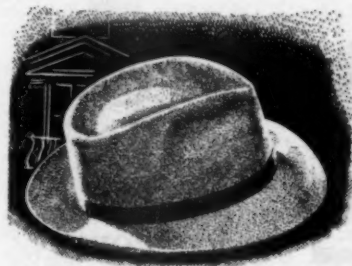
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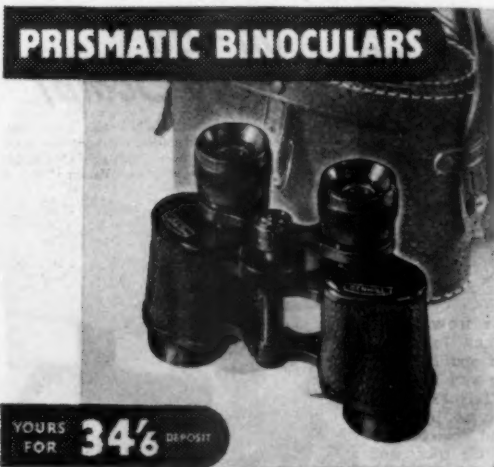


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"I would give a hundred pounds" he sighed, "to feed as heartily on beef as you."

Next morning the King left. Two weeks later the Abbot was arrested and taken to the Tower of London. For three days he starved. On the fourth he was served with a huge roast of beef. Hungrily he

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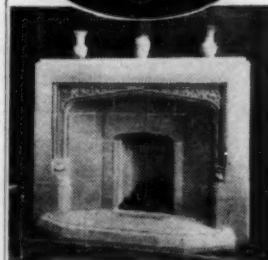
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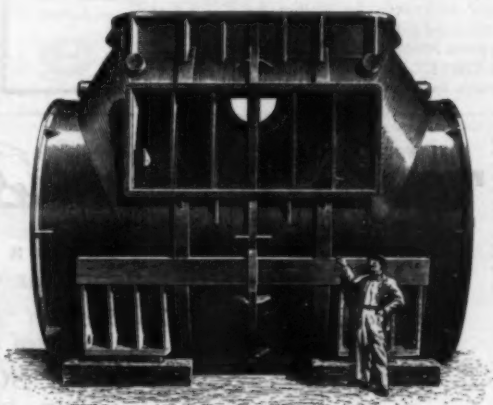
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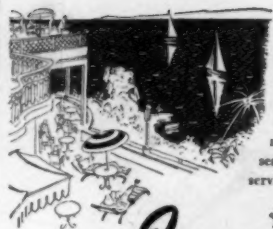
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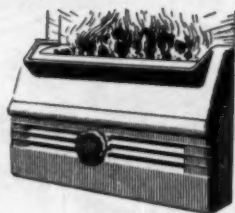


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Mewling and puking  
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YPM 11-156



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most beautiful modern  
and period designs,  
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Accuracy and distinction at a reasonable price

Ask your jeweller for ROTARY - by name

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ity bound to offer him my Parker-Knoll, I begin to harbour the most awful thoughts about him. I must exorcise this Mr. Hyde part of me. I'll get another Parker-Knoll; I hear there are many more about.



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CWS-35

## A man knows what he wants . . .

. . . so we don't presume to declare, sir, that you *must* wear Wm. Joyces. We would simply remark that these handsome shoes, featherweight and incredibly comfortable, are worth looking twice at in your shoe-shop. Men who know what they want in footwear are finding their wants met by Wm. Joyces

—real comfort shoes  
for men on their feet

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Wm Joyces.



MAXICOOLEE

Made on a new type last  
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Joyce signature in every  
pair.

Send for details of nearest stockist to Dept. W.P.S.

JOYCE (CALIFORNIA) LTD., 37-38, OLD BOND STREET, W.1.



## CHARIVARIA

"If ever there was a moment," Lady Violet Bonham Carter maintained in a political speech last week, "when we needed a first eleven to play for England, this is it." We cordially agree. The only stumbling-block is that, just at present, the Liberal team is several men short.

### Over the Moor to Skye

"The Scottish clans rise for the Prince they love, and for Lorna Doone, the woman whose loyalty was all-embracing—  
"BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE!"  
Advt. in *Tasmanian paper*

American visitors who are sometimes startled by the price of cocktails in the West End do not realize the immense difficulty of obtaining a Board of Trade timber permit for the sticks on which the cherries are impaled.

### "INVISIBLE WEAVERS REQUIRED"

Advt. in *North London paper*  
For ghost yarns?

*Pravda* claims that there are over thirty thousand centenarians in the U.S.S.R., of whom the eldest, Vassily Sergievich Tishkin, was born in 1806. He often recalls wistfully how he was just too young to join in the retreat from Moscow.

"The match against Oxford will be played against Abingdon this year."—*Cambridge University paper*  
Why? Oxford sunk again?

A New York bandit was arrested while being measured for a new suit. He was upset at finding himself hemmed in on all sides.

"Only three people, apart from police, plain clothes detectives, and Abbey officials, saw the historic block of coarse-green, reddish-grey sandstone return."—*Scotsman*  
Time they got that tartan off.

It is said that colour-blindness and deafness rarely go together. This rules out the possibility that *anyone* could really relax on a visit to the film of *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

### Long Range Group

"Hand-to-hand fighting broke out on several sectors north of the 38th Parallel. Communists counter-attacking in one part.

British troops were repulsed in a hill attack, and waited until American artillery moved into support.

R.A.F. rescue teams were also standing by at Harpur Hill, near Buxton.

*Manchester "Evening News"*

A Californian window-cleaner explained to the authorities why he had smashed a window: "You can clean just so many windows; then something seems to snap." And, just so often, it's the ladder.



## THE DANE'S RETURN

"WHITE Horse, White Horse by Uffington,  
Why do you stir and fret?  
Why do you strain and seek to rise  
With pawing hooves? Great Alfred lies  
Serene and sleeping yet."

"The turf is green, the turf is cool;  
But I recall the Dane.  
I remember his swords and his dragon-ship,  
How they set their mark on our English map;  
And I hear he comes again."

"Nelson over Trafalgar Square,  
Why do you fume and fuss?  
Why is your hand on your sword-hilt? Why

Have you sternly clapped to your sound left  
eye  
Your ever watchful glass?"

"The wind is fair, our land is strong;  
But I recall the Dane,  
How he dared my broadsides long ago;  
Never I fought with a gamier foe.  
And I hear he comes again."

"White Horse, White Horse, lie down to grass;  
Nelson, your fears are vain.  
You may settle again to your long repose.  
Good friends are made out of ancient foes.  
Right welcome is the Dane."

HH

## FOOD FOR TALK

"IT's all very nice to have 'em an inch longer," said an acid pair of spectacles, standing up at the back of the Village Hall, "but why don't they put the price on them?"

"Is that supposed to be a question?" asked the chairman of the Brains Trust, looking fogged.

"He's talking about lobsters," explained a pair of jet earrings. "You're quite right, young man. I thought there was some sort of law whereby all fish on the slab had to have the price clearly marked?"

"Mr. Hammond?" said the chairman.

"More a question for Miss Gorton, I think," said Mr. Hammond.

"You're supposed to be Law, aren't you?" said the chairman.

"I am," admitted Mr. Hammond, reluctantly, "but fish is Household and Domestic, and that's Miss Gorton."

"Oh, all right, all right," said the chairman. "Miss Gorton?"

Miss Gorton flashed a reproachful glance at Mr. Hammond, and took a sip of water to help her think. It is her usual policy to keep in the background until the gentlemen of the team have given her a pointer on how to answer.

"The standard size of lobsters," said Miss Gorton, rising, "has been increased by one—er—overall inch in order to make them larger."

There was an astounded silence.

Miss Gorton went the colour of the subject under discussion and sat down.

"What I'm asking," said the spectacles patiently, "is why they don't stick the price on fish—any fish—in fishmongers'. Lobsters was merely an illustration."

"Jolly good illustration, too," endorsed an interested briar-pipe. "I'm very fond of a lobster myself, but I'm dashed if I'm going to go into the shop to find out how much they are."

"You won't often find a man who will," agreed the jet earrings. "They hate having to come out again when it's too much."

"They don't come out again," said an embittered milk-bottle-top shopping-bag. "They just whistle, airy-like, and fork out."

"Maybe we do," said the briar-pipe, "but we don't go there again."

"If you ask me, fishmongers don't ticket their fish because they're too ashamed of the price of everything," said a disillusioned fox-fur.

"Nonsense!" said the shopping-bag sharply. "Fishmongers are strangers to shame, the prices they charge."

"You're perfectly right, ma'am," the jet earrings shouted across to her. "You'd never believe what I was called on to pay for four miserable little fillets of plaice last week."

"Everybody knows plaice is a national disgrace," said the fox-fur. "I bought just a little one last Wednesday—or would it be Thursday?—and when I asked how much it was . . ."

"That's what I'm getting at," interrupted the spectacles. "You oughtn't to have to ask how much it is. You ought to be able to look at it on the slab, and go inside or pass it by, as the case may be."

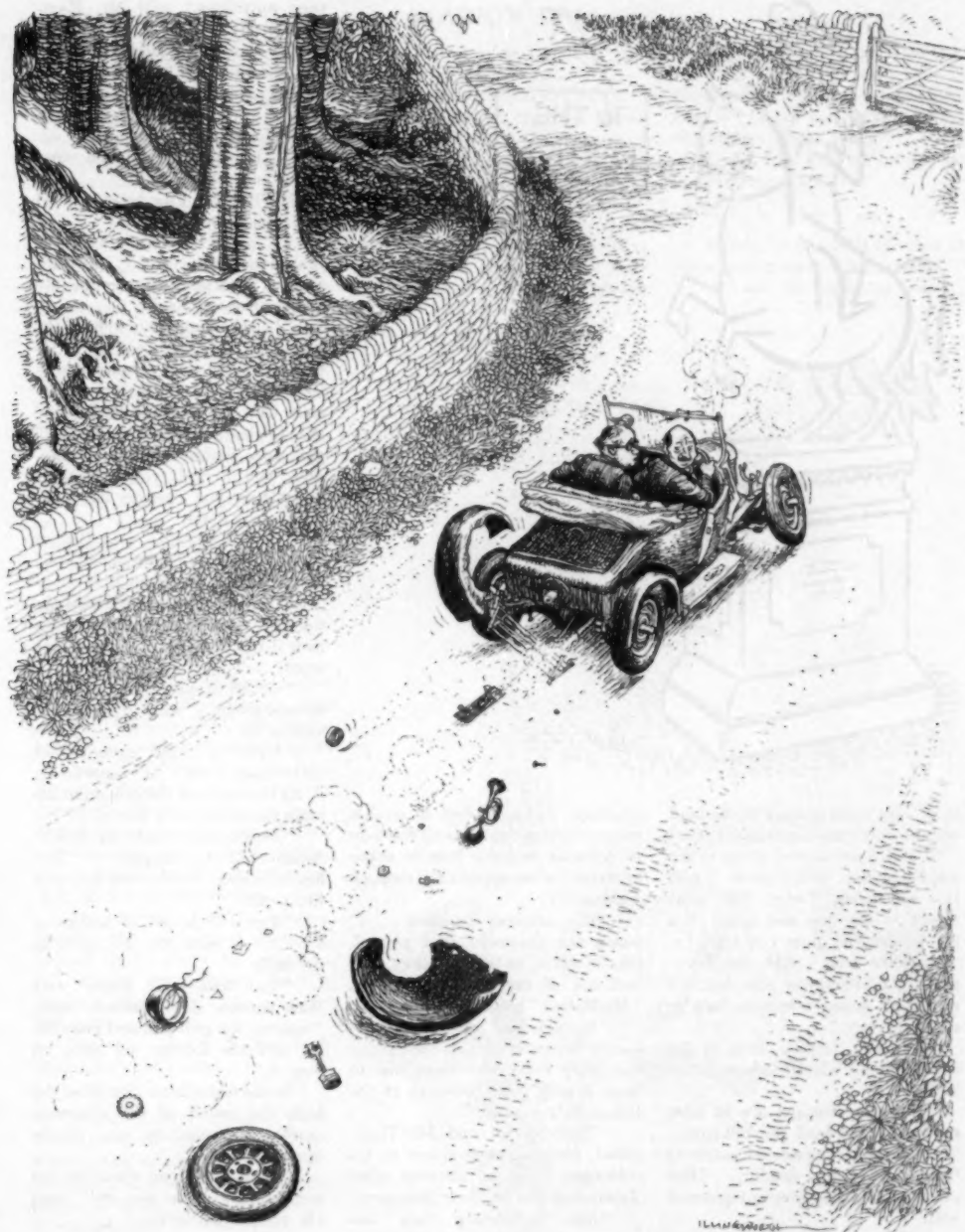
"Don't suppose they'd ever sell anything, if they warned you what they meant to soak you," said a hand-painted American tie. "Same with fruit-shops. They put so-much a pound on carrots and spuds, and so on, but when it comes to pineapples and melons and mushrooms . . ."

"The only really expensive thing they put the price on is ham," said the jet earrings. "They seem to just glory in sticking eleven shillings a pound on that. They don't even bother to call it two-and-nine a quarter to make it sound cheaper."

"But at least they're frank and open about ham," argued the spectacles. "Now, a thing I'm very partial to is a nice Dover sole . . ."

"Grilled and served slit up the middle with a walnut of butter on the backbone!" asked the fox-fur anxiously.

"A thing I've always wondered," said the shopping-bag, "is why



"THAT'S RIGHT, CLEM, PRESS ON REGARDLESS."



there isn't a fishmonger in the land will skin more than one side for you."

"If I *knew* it was going to set me back, say, half-a-crown," said the spectacles, "why, I'd treat myself to one, now and again. It's the uncertainty puts you off."

"Quite true," said the briar-pipe. "I like Dover sole, but I'd rather get sausages because they're easier to buy."

A hiss of derision from all the ladies present whistled through the hall.

"I mean sausages are at least marked," explained the briar-pipe.

"Marked 'Registered Customers Only,'" said the fox-fur. "But never at the shop you're registered with."

"Will somebody kindly inform me," the shopping-bag inquired of the Brains Trust with elaborate

courtesy, "why we had to send a team of sausage-experts all the way to America to learn how to make sausages we've apparently stopped making!"

"The original question . . ." began the chairman, and paused. On the whole, he thought, they were well out of the original question. "Mr. Bates?" he said encouragingly.

"My opinion," said Mr. Bates, basely deserting to the enemy, "is that they went over there just to have a jolly good blow-out at the tax-payer's expense."

"The object," said Mr. Hammond, frowning reprovingly at his colleague, "was to discover what Americans like in their sausages."

"And 'apparently they discovered that Americans like milk-powder in 'em," said the briar-pipe.

"Milk-powder makes a sausage

very nutritious," said Mr. Hammond stiffly.

"To blazes with nutritious food!" said the shopping-bag vehemently. "What I want is food I like the taste of."

She coloured.

"I beg pardon, all the company," she added.

Mr. Bates and the briar-pipe led the applause.

"I wish I knew," said the chairman plaintively, "why our sessions invariably degenerate into a discussion on food."

"It's the same everywhere," the briar-pipe told him consolingly. "Go into a pub and start discussing anything you please—the latest Einstein Theory, 'Tales of Hoffmann,' the England Test team—and I'll guarantee within a couple of minutes you'll find you're talking about how you used to like your rump-steak done."

"Grilled *quickly*," said the jet earrings. "Rich brown outside and all red and runny inside."

"Cooked with butter," said the fox-fur. "A smear of butter drawn over it the moment it begins to get warm . . ."

"Cut thick, mind you," said the shopping-bag. "with a curve of yellow fat . . ."

"Have a plate getting hot underneath," said the spectacles. "Lift the steak off the grill on to the plate the instant it's done . . ."

"Don't prick it with the fork!" shouted the briar-pipe. "For heaven's sake, don't prick it as you lift it off!"

"Put a little pat of butter on top . . ." said the jet earrings dreamily.

"And then—and then," said Miss Gorton in a hushed voice, "take up the grill-pan and pour the fat and the lovely, red juice all over it."

In the rapt silence that filled the hall, the sound of the chairman swallowing painfully was clearly heard.

"I could tell you where all the rump-steaks have got to!" said the spectacles, darkly.

"Will you come up on to the platform, please?" said the chairman earnestly. COLIN HOWARD

# CLARION CALL

MY friend Harrington's colleague Mumby, whom a national newspaper pays for writing about cricket, tells me that the time is now ripe to review the prospects for the coming season in not more than four hundred words.

Ever-welcome visitors to these shores, he therefore begins, the South Africans will be welcome on every ground they play on. As with the West Indians last year, the New Zealanders the year before and the Australians the year before that, their motto is "Attack!" In Nourse they have a fine batsman and popular skipper; in Athol Rowan they have a fine bowler; and, according to all reports, which he has carefully read, the team are very fine fieldmen indeed.

I say that if anybody else tells me the South Africans are fine fieldmen, I shall scream.

Mumby ignores me and adds that the South Africans will be very popular and England will have to go all out to beat them.

And what of the home side? Mumby asks. Undoubtedly the nucleus is there. The selectors are sure to give serious consideration to the claims of Hutton to open the innings. Bedser (A. V.) is likely to be asked to bowl. Evans is a probable choice as wicket-keeper. Health and form permitting, Denis Compton may well catch the all-important eyes of the powers that be.

That leaves seven places, Mumby tells me, one of which he himself would advise the selectors to earmark for Skipper Freddie Brown, who also did well in Australia.

But the selectors' is the final choice, he points out.

Youth! Youth! Youth! Such is the modern cry, Mumby continues; and nowhere is this more true than in our glorious summer game. County committees everywhere are eager in their search for young players, for the old 'uns cannot carry on for ever.

Never were the opportunities

more golden than to-day, particularly for fast bowlers.

Few amateurs can now afford to play the game all the year round, Mumby adds.

In conclusion, says Mumby, what of the game itself? Times without number he has pointed out that it is the customer who pays. Now at last his words are bearing

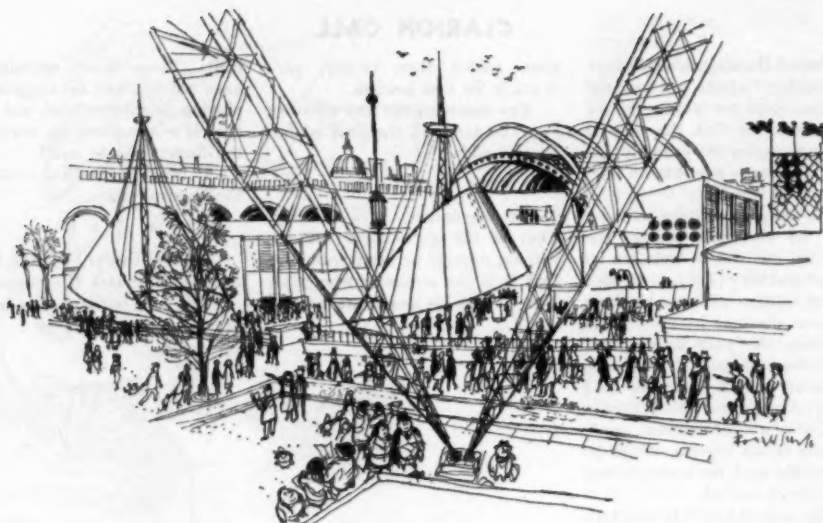
fruit. Those county captains who have not followed his suggestion of playing brighter cricket and trying hard to win can now be counted on the fingers of one hand.

It must be Festival cricket for the Festival year.

Mumby thinks he is the first to make that remark this summer.

But not, perhaps, the last.





## REPORT ON THE SOUTH BANK

### II. SECOND IMPRESSIONS—"UPSTREAM"

AS this journal, with its stern insistence on originality of material, may well be the only one begrudging readers a printed plan, perhaps I ought to offer a word of warning about navigational perils on the southern shore. In both conception and arrangement the Exhibition is *thematic*; remember that. All the official literature makes great play with this word, and an aloof young lady, whom I offended in The Natural Scene and The Country, actually uttered it at me.

I realize now that she was probably what the official literature describes as a *theme convener*, and when you have convened a theme the size of The Natural Scene and The Country you feel deeply about men in old mackintoshes who enter it at the wrong end and complain because they have difficulty in tracing hurdle-making and other rural crafts from such improbable origins as a showcase full of scaup, poached and smew. Please don't make the same mistake; if you file soberly along the dotted lines laid down in the Guide you will find yourself entering everything by the

front door—which, in the case of The Natural Scene and The Country, will bring you face to face with some very nice photographs of owls. If despite your best intentions your orientation becomes blurred, as a result, say, of being repeatedly confronted with a block of administration offices when you are really looking for the Rodney Pier, and you find yourself entering a theme by the Exit, on no account worsen your position by indulging in uninformed criticism of its exhibits. When I declared myself frankly unreceptive towards four sculptured agriculturists with heads and arms but no bodies (though one of them wears a trim felt hat) my aloof young lady became distant. She thought they were perfectly lovely, said so, and left me. I had to bury my blushes behind a model sawmill.

No, the slack exhibition-goer whose method is to shuffle into any building which looks as if it might have somewhere to sit down simply won't be tolerated here. This is a planned thing. It is thematic. It is designed to lead you by the hand from pre-pterodactyl Britain to the present day, showing you the joys and sorrows, triumphs and frustrations of being British. Promise me, at any rate, that you will try

to stay in one circuit at a time; the Upstream, say, which embraces all the pavilions and pleasaunces above Hungerford Bridge, as distinct from the Downstream embracing all below. Both, of course, are equally thematic, but the theme of the Upstream circuit is that of the Land, that of the Downstream, the People. Sometimes the themes get out of hand a little—even the finest planners must falter at the need to embody a couple of railway bridges in their scheme of things, and they have really embodied them very cleverly, though I did hear someone complain that it was impossible to get far enough away from one of the murals underneath the arches. It was meant quite kindly, I feel sure.

A last word on the geography: there are at least a dozen bars, restaurants and cafés, and these may well be the ruin of a visitor's day. To turn the outing into a mere gastronomical adventure, moving purposefully from one place of refreshment to another and capping each call with a token dash round the nearest pavilion, can produce no very clear impression of our national heritage. In such a visitor's mind bottled beer will be vaguely linked with Power and Production,

paste sandwiches with Sea and Ships, ginger-ale and lemonade with The Minerals of the Island. What is more, when he has made the full round of these fleshly amenities he will experience the unsettling delusion that the Skylon is falling on him; even a man perfectly steady on his feet can experience this if he looks up at it long enough, though the Shot Tower, in spite of the human flies crawling about dizzily in the radar web at its summit, doesn't have the same effect—but no doubt this is simply because it has been there long enough to inspire a certain confidence. Besides, it has balloons inside.\*

The Land of Britain, as you will learn if you follow your dotted line into the pavilion of that name (No. 1 on the map in almost any publication but this) has taken a terrible beating for some time now. There

\* I must ask indulgence for a non sequitur here and there. It is difficult to get all the facts in with impeccable continuity.

are intriguing peep-shows—dioramas, is it?—to prove this, supported by helpful reading-matter posted up on the cavern-like walls. Since its good old days as a lazy tropical island, some two hundred and twenty million years ago, our country has been "burst with volcanoes, roasted by desert suns, ground beneath glaciers, sweltered by tropic swamps, blanketed with river mud, smothered by sands and volcanic debris, squeezed by giant mountains," and generally maltreated until the supply of suitable verbs is exhausted. Naturally, unless the visitor begins, as planned, at No. 1, and becomes thoroughly impregnated with interesting information of this kind, he can scarcely thrill to the full intensity of wonderment when, seven pavilions and two hundred and twenty million years later, he learns in the Dome of Discovery of the remarkable resilience of the British spirit, which has not only risen above these convulsions of Nature and adjusted

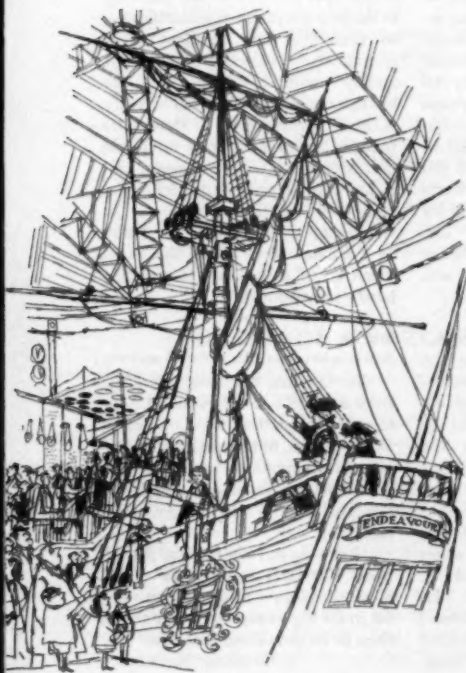
itself to the violent deterioration of our climate from skin-tanning sunshine to bone-soaking drizzle (each perfectly constant in its own era) but has retained enough native wit and energy to dispatch to the moon messages rendered clearly visible to Mr. and Mrs. Everyman by means of an illuminated dotted line spelling its way between two near-spheres on a screen. I say nothing (or very little) of our triumphs in the field of weather forecasting, here expounded to a grateful public for the first time, whereby the imminence of fresh bouts of glacier-grinding, mud-blanketing, mountain-squeezing and other rare phenomena (including desert sun-roasting) can be foretold with shameless assurance. There are fifteen thousand exhibits; they include W. G. Grace's bat and a sculpture of two undressed ladies with very thick legs



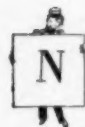
who seem to be offering each other something out of a bowl.

I see that I have in my Upstream notes a jotting about the biscuit-plant. This remarkable vegetable, which I seem to have encountered in Power and Production—No, I'm sorry; I remember now. I was standing high up in the Gallery of Metals looking down on a variety of industrial activities on the floor below when my eye was arrested in its wild rolling by a mammoth slab of cream-coloured machinery, throbbing with drab insistence and tended by a number of pretty girls in white overalls. Another girl, who was leaning over the rail beside me with an aloof, theme-convening air, told me that it was a biscuit-plant. I went down to have a look, and found that British scientists and engineers have indeed perfected a device which, with no more mechanical intricacy than is involved in an ordinary railway locomotive or television transmitter, stamps out innumerable ice-cream wafers, every one perfect. Nearby an engine belches hypodermic needles. An adjacent loom, with a lower production rate, weaves stair-carpets.

Copies of the Woodworking (Amendment of Scope) Regulations, 1945, will by now have been removed from the D. of D., where the eaves are inhabited by British sparrows. There is an atomic pile. Flood prevention, etched-welded rail joints with cutaway sections, and the nervous mechanism of the squid are also touched upon. None of the sculptures flatters British girlhood. Liftshafts at Waterloo have been whitewashed. The Exhibition, which has devoured six thousand six hundred tons of cement, and is thematic, is lit up at night. J. B. BOOTHROYD



## AT THE PICTURES

*Born Yesterday—Mad Wednesday*

NOT having seen the play by GARSON KANIN which has been made into the film *Born Yesterday* (Director: GEORGE CUKOR), I can still recognize, I think, the main fault about the adaptation. The play was fundamentally a pretty biting satire on political corruption; the film, though it remains satirical in manner, tries also to be a developing character-study and, in part, propaganda for good old U.S. democracy—explicit propaganda, predigested for the film audience. These ingredients do not blend particularly well, but the excellent acid dialogue and particularly the extremely funny performance by JUDY HOLLIDAY still make the picture thoroughly enjoyable. I don't think I am being



[*Born Yesterday*  
So this is Washington  
Billie Dawn—JUDY HOLLIDAY

unduly influenced by the fact that Miss HOLLIDAY got an Academy Award for this impersonation of a flat-voiced, dead-pan blonde of monumental stupidity; to make such a character develop, and gradually come to arouse sympathy instead of appalled derision, is a considerable feat. The only thing is, as I suggested, that such a development or revelation of character does not really belong in this sort of story. Broad satire likes its characters consistent all the way through: symbols, "humours," with invariably predictable responses. Also out of place is the propaganda: the conducted tour of the historic sights of Washington, with Miss HOLLIDAY as the awed pupil of the newspaperman (WILLIAM HOLDEN). With these reservations—which make the piece unsatisfactory as a film from a critical point of view, but are not likely to interfere with anyone's unthinking enjoyment of it—*Born Yesterday* is to be recommended. BRODERICK CRAWFORD has a fine time in a sort of comic version of the part he played in *All the King's Men*. I should perhaps warn you that you may have trouble in understanding much—at least in the early scenes—of what the girl says; but since it very often floats downstream on a torrent of laughter at something else, anyway, this hardly matters. A good many people will feel inclined to go and listen to it again.

The name "Harold Diddlebock" for the character played by HAROLD LLOYD in *Mad Wednesday* (Director: PRESTON STURGES) is presumably a twenty-eight-year-old relic, like the first uproarious scene of the film itself, which is the very scene (now provided with facetious noises from the background orchestra) that ended the old Harold Lloyd picture *The Freshman*. That the other names here (except that of J. E. Waggleberry, who perhaps also appeared in the earlier picture) should be somewhat more subdued in their determination to be funny

[*Mad Wednesday*

Lion Comique

Harold Diddlebock—HAROLD LLOYD

might be regarded as symbolic of the development of screen comedy—if there were indeed any sign of a similar tendency in any other department. In effect, Mr. LLOYD's new picture is as full of delirious slap-stick as any of his old ones were; and, since it is also Mr. STURGES's new picture, you may notice that the effects are piled up in the Sturges manner, scientifically, so that the final moment of a cumulative situation produces not merely another laugh but the loudest one of all. The film is really nothing special, but it should be popular because its tone is simple and friendly as well as funny, and it has one or two quite delightful scenes—in particular the one in which the late EDGAR KENNEDY as a barman sets about the exact blending of a cocktail to suit the hero's temperament.

## Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

In London, the most sparkling show is still *La Ronde*, which I hope to write about next week. *Circle of Danger* is an unpretentious, enjoyable little mystery; and there are some fine spectacular sea fights in *Captain Horatio Hornblower, R.N.* (25/4/51).

Releases include *Halls of Montezuma* (18/4/51), a last-war (U.S. Marines) picture also more successful in its big sweeping action scenes than in its detail and dialogue.

RICHARD MALLETT

## FROGHOPPER

ARCHITECT of Xanadu,  
builder in light-imprisoning foam  
more delicate than honey-dew,  
within its microscopic span  
lord, O insect Kubla Khan,  
of thousand-lensed pleasure-dome:  
clodhoppers call thee and it,  
indifferently, cuckoo-spit.

Dweller in miraculous glass,  
how do your Marvell'd hours pass?  
What's the Alhambra of the Moors?  
A thousand magic casements yours,  
opening acrially  
on dark grass-forests at your feet  
or, under a Titanic sky,  
on perilous seas of meadowsweet.

Vertically upwards runs  
Alph, the sacred river of sap,  
from which you make the glass to trap  
your fractured universe of suns,  
lens on lens reflecting bright  
its multi-visioned, prism'd light.  
The dark-wing'd bird, Death, it is true,  
may gulp your universe and you.

If you can make of cuckoo-spit  
a thing so to its purpose fit  
of use and beauty harmonized, one,  
protection both from bird and sun—  
then engineering genius,  
our architects and engineers,  
shall make what palaces for us,  
surpassing all the dreams of Wells?  
Yea, even though Foreboding tells  
her nightmare whispers in our ears,  
if you, froghopper, fearing death, can be  
courageous, and a builder, so can we.

R. C. SCRIVEN

## THE STAGE CHARLADY

THE stage charlady is an intensely amusing old party, and the wonder is that it never occurred to her to go on the stage herself. She would have made a fortune as a comic, for there never was anyone so quick with a come-back as she.

There are two kinds of stage charlady—the cross one, and the one with the heart of gold. The cross one (who works for the lady who lives in the stage lounge) always gives notice in the middle of the second act, when the troubles are beginning to accumulate. The one with the heart of gold remains at her post to the last, and sometimes discovers the solution to some particularly difficult problem. But, whether cross or kind, the stage charlady does remarkably little charring.

For one thing, she only attempts to clean a very small corner of the room, and it's a poor effort she makes at that, for most of her time is taken up in the exercise of her principal talent, which is conversation.

The charlady with the heart of gold (who normally works in an office building) has certain other offices to perform besides practising her repartee. It is she who comforts the juvenile lead when she buries her head in her arms after the row with the boss's son. "Why, you pore dear," says the stage charlady. "Let Minnie get you a nice cupper tea." And off she goes into the next room and returns with a steaming cup in less time than it takes to light the gas-ring. The stage charlady knows just how to talk to the juvenile lead, for she has had much the same experience when she was young, and she tells some funny stories about her first husband which soon bring the smiles through the tears.

The stage charlady is a great partisan, and, where she takes a fancy, woe betide the man or the woman who puts a slight upon her favourite, for she does not mind a bit whom she flies at in a good cause. A piece of the stage charlady's mind followed by a sharp exit and a slammed door is always certain of a round of applause. And the extraordinary thing is that she is always in the right. She insults the boss and he confesses that he asked for it; she abuses the lady superintendent and she breaks down and admits that she is a hard, jealous woman; she comforts the pretty typist, and assists her to marry the managing director; and as for the boss's son, she has controlled his destinies from the beginning. In short, everyone is deeply indebted to the stage charlady, and everyone submits to her judgment. She is the voice of conscience, and they know it.



## THE COSMIC MESS

THE methods of work of a famous crime-story-writer were discussed in the papers not long ago. It was said that he worked all night and dictated at the rate of *four thousand words an hour*. Most novelists, writing their works in the old-fashioned way, are pretty pleased with themselves if they keep up an average of two thousand words a day, though, working overtime with a flush of energy or inspiration, they can do five thousand words now and then. Few, this column thinks, could boast of writing five thousand words every day of the week. To hear of a chap who turns out, by any method, four thousand words an hour, or twenty-four thousand between midnight and the dawn—or ninety-six thousand (a whole book) in four nights is discouraging to the ordinary plodder. But can it be done? It means, this column reckons, sixty-five words a minute (the numbers, you will now realize, mark batches of sixty-five words). The speaker, or the B.B.C. talker, this column believes, does about one hundred and twenty words a minute. But the speaker, as a rule, has prepared his speech, more or less, and the B.B.C. fellow is reading from a script. The novelist, though he may have his main story in his head, is always marching into the blue. At any moment his characters may start taking charge and doing things he never intended. He must pause to consider whether they can be permitted. Can the hero, for example, who began as pale and anæmic, be allowed to knock out two tough men with revolvers? Then, he may have known all the time that he was going to get rid of a tiresome character: but when he comes to the point some thought must be given to the method. Even the slow psychological plodder may find that his heroine's eyes have changed from blue to brown after four or five chapters. How much greater must be the difficulties of the purveyor of crime and excitement! He has a complicated plot, a death or a battle every few pages, rows of beautiful ladies whose numerous costumes are described in

generous detail. Almost all the characters are double-crossing somebody, and many complex technical questions arise. The style of this particular writer is vivid and original, and this column reads his books with relish. But surely he must stop to think sometimes. Is he always sure what colour those eyes were in Chapter One? If it is true that he produces at the rate of four thousand words an hour, this column takes off all its hats to him. This column would be ashamed to say how long it took this column to write the words you have just read. It would have taken the crime-story-writer about seven minutes to dictate them.

\* \* \* \* \*

This column much enjoyed being the guest at the Christmas Dinner of the Food and Wine Society at Ballarat, a small green charming country town in Victoria, Australia. It was about 100 degrees in the shade that day: and we did not wear evening dress. But M. André Simon, the King of the Table, would have been impressed and delighted by the proceedings. All the wine-bottles, including the sherry, were draped in brown paper, so that there was no visual evidence of origin. After the soup the Chairman called upon two gentlemen to discourse upon the sherry, say what they thought of it and where it came from. Others later discussed the white wine, the red and the port. The speeches were learned and loving, and couched in the language dear to the scholar of wine, and pleasant to the ear even of those who only "know what they like". The wine had a "good nose", it was "round", or "reticent", "generous", "honest", "discreet", "retiring", "bold" and heaven knows what. If it had had more body the speaker would have said it came from the Hunter River, and was bottled by —. More likely it came from the Tanunda country, or from Tintara, bottled by —, and so on.

The Wine-Master then undraped the bottle and displayed the label:

and, to this column at least, the experts were astonishingly often right.

Later, the Food received the same skilled attention, and again this column goggled in admiration. The soup had been Toheroa Soup, made of a New Zealand shell-fish. This column formed a strong affection for Toheroa Soup twenty-six years ago, though it is not to be recommended as a daily dish, for the soup is rich to the point of opulence. That night the soup looked just like Toheroa Soup, and had the proper "texture" (you see, this column can do it too): but somehow it had not quite the proper flavour. "*C'est magnifique—mais ce n'est pas La Toheroa*," this column said to itself—not to anyone else, for it was an honoured guest, and it had not seen Toheroa Soup for a very long time.

A gentleman from New Zealand was asked to speak about the soup. He gave an interesting dissertation on the history, and nature, and habits of the Toheroa. As for the soup, he was inclined to blame the *cuisine*. Somebody, he thought, had been heavy-handed with the lemons, or perhaps the vinegar. Another gentleman, too, though he had enjoyed the soup, thought that the chef had not done the Toheroa full justice.

The Food-Master (who must have been enjoying himself) then explained: they had cried, he said, for the especial pleasure of an honoured guest, to get Shark's Fin Soup. That had been impossible. So they had put Toheroa Soup on the Bill of Fare. But no Toheroa could be got. "This soup," he said, "was made of Australian mussels, rather cleverly counterfeiting the Toheroa."

So this untutored column had not been far out. A. P. H.

6 6

## Spread It Abroad

"BRITAIN CAN MAKE IT NO. 16—THE COMMON COLD."  
C.O.I. film catalogue

# TO THOSE ABOUT TO TRAVEL BY AIR

*Don't pass this on to anyone else, but if you want to make sure of getting the best seat in the plane, all you have to do is to—*

*stand about—*



*stand about—*



*unobtrusively—*



*near the—*



*exit door—*



*so that when the loud-speaker—*



*tells you to embark—*



*you can—*



*get away—*



*well ahead of—*



*all the others.*



*"I know what they're thinking. They're thinking what a shabby old saucepan to let a boy get his head stuck into."*

## COMING HOME

COMING home on the bus to-night  
There was two young fellers sat opposite;  
One was a Saucebox you could see  
But the other one looked like a Mug of Cold Tea.  
I give Joan a nudge and I had to larf,  
"Fancies 'isself," and she said "Not 'arf,"  
And then we began to giggle.  
We giggled and giggled and giggled and giggled,  
And all the time we spluttered and giggled  
He wriggled.

Saucy slipped us a naughty wink  
And whispered to Mug—and what d'you think?  
He blushed!  
He blushed and he blushed, so red he blushed  
That up to the top of his head it rushed,  
And he looked so mis'erable, dumb and crushed  
That we shushed.  
Only now and again a small giggle got through  
And he bent down and fiddled about with his shoe;  
Joan bit her handkerchief clean in two,  
But we tried.

And then he got off at the 'ospital  
And Joan said "Oh, lor, p'r'aps 'is Mum is ill,  
P'r'aps she's died."  
And we cried and cried—not loud—but we cried,  
The conductor shouted "Full up inside,"  
And that's what we were, and we wanted to hide  
Till the end of the ride.

## BIOGRAPHY

"I DON'T know whether you've ever read Gibbon," said the man at the bar.

"I don't see how you could," I said. "There has been no public announcement."

He was not deterred.

"It's very much tied up," he went on, "with the story of my life. I was a shy, nervous lad, neither given to athletic exercise nor to study. I used to mope and dream. But that was before my parents found out that my Uncle Jeremy intended to make me his heir. He was a man of vast self-confidence, was my Uncle Jeremy, and nothing attracted him so much as danger. If my Uncle Jeremy wanted to cross the road, he crossed it, and the traffic just had to go round. If there was a notice up anywhere to say that bathing was forbidden, it was there that my Uncle Jeremy chose to bathe. A difficult bit of climbing was a delight to him. If there was a single pole stretched over a raging torrent, my Uncle Jeremy would want to cross by it. Every school holiday I had I used to spend with my Uncle Jeremy. My parents made me do it.

"Let's see if we can jump this, or climb that," he was always saying. And up or over he would go, and I had to follow him, with fear gripping my heart and death staring me in the face, as you might say. How I got to hate that man! If only he would tumble, or drown, and leave me his money! But at forty-six or so he was as strong and active as a lion, and whatever he did I had to follow him. You can see for yourself the temptation that came to me. One push at the right moment, one challenge to swim a bit further out, and happiness would be mine.

"And then one day a terrible idea presented itself to me. Suppose my Uncle Jeremy did have an accident while I was with him. What were the police going to say? How could I prove that it was an accident? The darkest suspicions would be raised. So now there were two terrors assailing me at every turn. Whether I fell down a precipice, or was swept away by a current, or the same thing happened to my Uncle Jeremy, either way I was doomed. My life became a misery.

"And then one day he said he had seen the opening of a cave half-way down a cliff, and was going to scramble down and have a look at it.

"Come along, my boy," he said.

"You go first, uncle," I cried.

"And down he went. He slipped. Chalk and stones clattered round him. 'That's done it,' I thought. But no. He caught some kind of a tree sticking out of the cliff face, and hung on to it with his hands. There he was, half-way down the cliff, kicking and shouting, his legs waving in the air, trying to get a foothold. I ran for help. What a run that was! Nearly two miles, I should say, across the downs, to find someone with a rope to pull him up by, and all the time feeling that the rope was round my own neck, if he fell off before I got back again. Well, we hauled him up. It took a long time, for he was a big-built man, and you can imagine the anguish I felt while we were doing it.

They kept asking me how he got there, and I don't think anyone believed he would have been such a fool as to climb down there of his own accord. I was shaking with fright."

He took a long drink, and put his mug down.

"I'm sorry," I said, "but I don't really see what this has got to do with Gibbon."

"You wouldn't," he said. "No, I don't suppose you would. Point is, that the tumble broke his nerve. Broke his health too. He became a complete invalid. Took to his bed, and hardly stirred from the house. And what do you think he made me do? Said he'd never given enough of his life to literature, and so I had to go round and read Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* by his bedside. Day after day in my holidays I had to waste, reading all that dreary rubbish aloud to him.

"Read that bit about Commodus over again," he would say.

"The worse the emperors were, the more he liked them, and whenever I said to my parents I couldn't do it any longer, they would say 'Remember the money, my lad,' and off I would go like a lamb.

"But his health was failing badly. It was a hard race at first between Gibbon and him, but Gibbon was the stayer. He had my uncle's measure all the time. We'd got as far as Justinian before my uncle died. I can

remember it as if it was yesterday. End of chapter forty-three it was:

"And his reign is disgraced by a visible decrease of the human species, which has never been repaired in some of the fairest countries of the globe." I remember wondering how much of the human species had been like my Uncle Jeremy, as I closed the book that autumn day. Twenty thousand he left me, and can you wonder if I ran through it all in five years? Extravagant, I dare say. I'll not excuse myself. A bit of the Roman emperors must have got into my blood. Anyhow, that's how it was, and that's why I was going to ask you——"

"I see," I said, rather sadly. "Well, I'll buy your Uncle Jeremy from you, if that's what you mean."

He took what I gave him, and crammed it into his pocket.

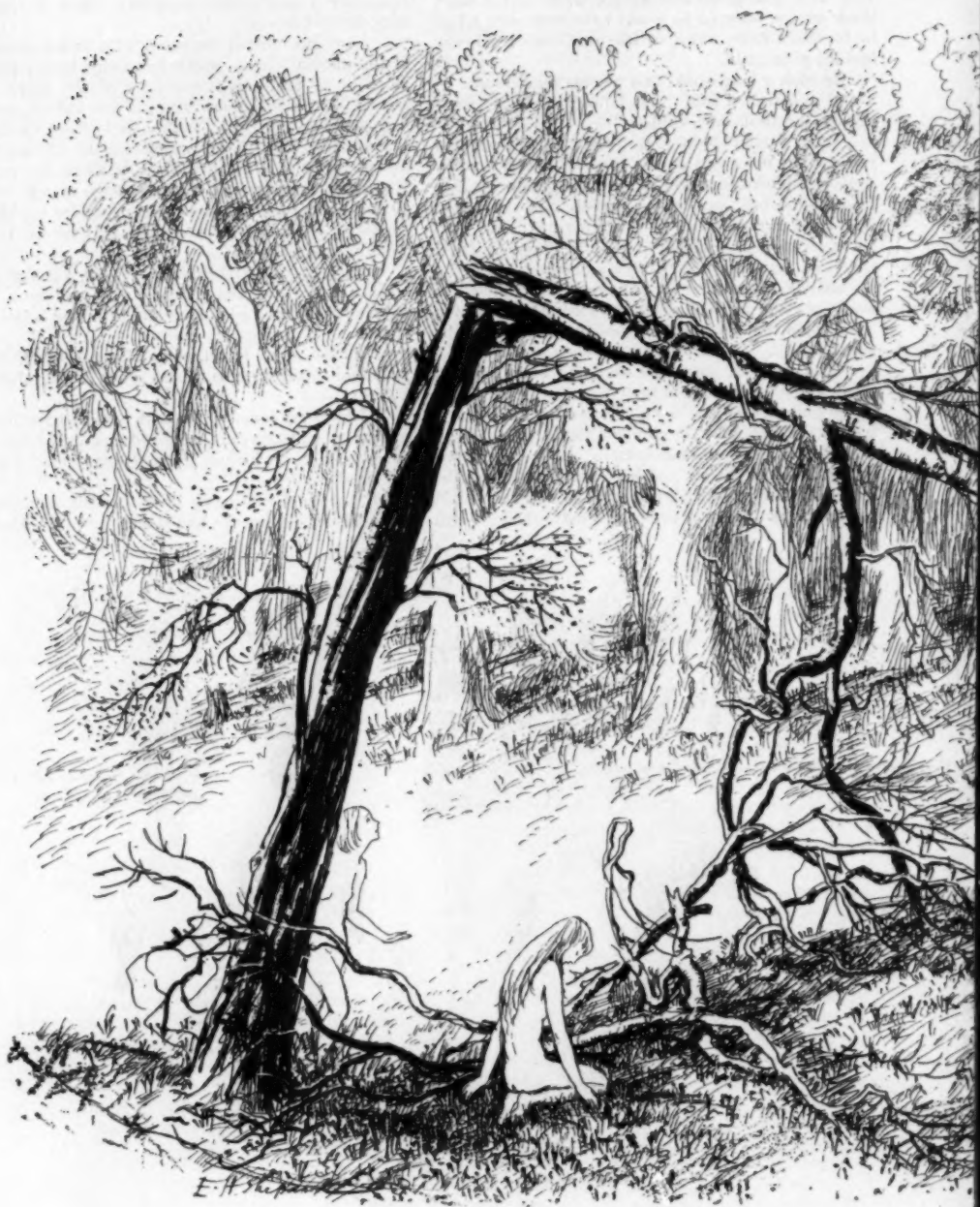
"By the way," I said, as an afterthought. "Have you told many people about your Uncle Jeremy before?"

"I have my honour," he said, "and I hope I have my pride. I never even thought of him until I saw you come in. I never had an Uncle Jeremy at all. Now, my Uncle George——"

But only the swinging door was left to listen to what his Uncle George had done.

EVON





## LAMENT FOR A TREE

The tall birch is dead that graced the side of the valley,  
Shining in the winter woods in the dark of a December day,  
Dancing in the darkened woods with her silver filigree of branches:  
The tall birch is broken, and her branches are withered away.

The wind blew over the hill and harried the woods in winter;  
The oaks roared in their branches, and the birch-tree swayed below.  
But death drifted from the sky silently, with no wind stirring,  
Crushing the patient trees with a cruel coronet of snow.

And now the snow is forgotten, and the green breaks out like fire—  
Burning on the bare boughs, and the pride of summer is near:  
But the bole of the birch is broken, the silver lady of the forest  
Is broken and barren in the face of the heartless splendour of the year.

P. M. Hubbard





## CRAFTSMEN IN CONCORD

**I**N the year 1851, when he was seventeen years old, William Morris visited the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park. He made a rapid tour of the exhibition, we are told, and was then violently ill.

What Morris would think of our South Bank show, and how his sensitive stomach would behave when confronted by the various pavilions of modern industry are interesting speculations. Would he thunder "I told you so!" and retire hurriedly to the jetty alongside the Upstream Sequence? Or would he approve? My guess is that he would take a cab for No. 16 Hay Hill, W.1, and tell the cabbie to drive like hell.

The Crafts Centre, the headquarters of the artist-craftsmen of Great Britain, is a lively memorial to Morris's teaching. This does not mean, of course, that this handsome building is the meeting-place of

Luddite machine-wreckers, back-to-nature cranks, or anarchists: nobody here is plotting to blow industry sky-high or even to boycott its products. The Morris venerated at the Crafts Centre is not the young firebrand who advocated the destruction of all machines and their dark Satanic mills, but the older and wiser Morris who wrote: "Those almost miraculous machines, which if orderly forethought had dealt with them might even now be speedily extinguishing all irksome and unintelligent labour, leaving us free to raise the standard of skill of hand and energy of mind in our workmen, and to produce afresh that loveliness and order which only the hand of man guided by his own soul can produce..."

No, the visitor will find the Centre highly respectable and decorous. True, the incidence of red

beards\*, fancy waistcoats and sandals is rather high, but there are few corduroys or page-boy hair-dos on view: and none of the craftswomen favours a Burne-Jones waist-line or swan-neck.

I put my hand over my high-octane tie and consulted Mr. John Farleigh, the clean-shaven, soberly-dressed honorary chairman of the Centre. The Crafts Centre, he told me, was founded only a year or two ago by the combined efforts of five leading craft societies—The Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society (launched by Morris himself, in 1888), the Red Rose Guild of Craftsmen, the Senefelder Club, the Society of Scribes and Illuminators and the Society of Wood-engravers. Their aims were simply to "establish the status of fine Craftsmanship in Great Britain, to create a close contact between the craftsman and the public... and to encourage the development of a new generation of 'fine craftsmen.'" Through its council members the Centre is linked (as if you didn't know!) with the Council of Industrial Design, the Arts Council, the Rural Industries Bureau, the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and the Art-Workers' Guild.

At this point Mr. Farleigh was called away to a succession of committee meetings, and I was left to examine the exhibits and think things over...

The craftsmen of Britain, I decided, have been in the wilderness too long. They should have had their Crafts Centre fifty or sixty years ago. Their mistake then was to misinterpret Morris's message, to despair of the machine, and to retreat to their futile ivory towers.

The machine, as the maestro predicted, has proved a mixed blessing: it has burdened us with nasty things that go bang and *crump*, but it has also rescued the worker from drudgery and enabled him to substitute the tedium of an eight-hour day of machine-minding for the tedium of a twelve-hour day of repetitive bench-work. It is foolish and sentimental, surely, to

*Note to Editor:* On second thoughts I decided to omit my laughable reference to the Crafts Centre.

regard all old-time craftsmen as contented creative artists. The thrower who spent his days fashioning mugs on the potter's wheel enjoyed his labours little more than the robot operative of to-day: both jobs involve the same dull cycle of semi-automatic muscular movements, the same monotonous duplication and re-duplication.

Few people are capable of continuous creative effort, as distinct from routine effort, and for this fact we should be grateful, for the number of outlets for creative effort has always been limited—whether in the old craft trades or in our latter-day neotechnic industries. Fine crafts, like fine arts, are the occupations of fortunate minorities, and Morris's goal of a Britain full of happy wood-carvers, calligraphists, potters and weavers was merely the dream of a romantic idealist . . .

Mr. Farleigh reappeared for a moment with the information that he would be with me almost immediately: he had only one more committee meeting to subdue.

Now where was I? Oh, yes—the dream of a romantic idealist. Well, all this doesn't mean that more and better craftsmanship is a hopeless objective: there are thousands of people who, given a little encouragement, would delight in the exercise of their native manipulative skills and find it far more satisfying than pools, "dogs," the cinema and desultory reading. But in these days the pursuit of "fine crafts" is an expensive business, and few people can afford to tackle more than the systematized fidgeting implicit in such hobbies as fretwork and raffia. Instead of practising the old crafts, most of us busy ourselves with the steady stream of repairs to the home and tinker incessantly with the internal combustion engine, radio and television.

"Yes," said Mr. Farleigh, reappearing with his gavel, "our 'fine craftsmen' are few in number, but their contribution to public taste, industrial design, and, indirectly, the national economy is substantial. Even in this age of large-scale industry, when the work of individual craftsmen can be enjoyed by few, we can still set standards

that help to determine whether machine-made articles are beautiful or ugly."

"But isn't there an entirely different measure of quality, a different—er—*aesthetic*?" I said, airing a bit of mugged-up jargon.



"I mean, goods intended for machine reproduction cannot be designed satisfactorily by craftsmen unfamiliar with machine processes, can they?"

"Good design means using materials and tools intelligently, sympathetically; and good workmanship means carrying out good design as successfully as possible. There is only one standard of judgment, whether we are dealing with industry or the crafts. Anyway, many of our members also design specifically for industry."

"That may well be . . ." I began. But the chairman was whisked away again to deal with a recrudescence of meetings. "Mind you," he flung at me as he disappeared upstairs, "we do tend at times to live too near our work, to be more proud sometimes of hidden joints and finish than of overall appearance. We are *designer*-craftsmen here, not merely craftsmen, and sometimes we allow ourselves to forget that."

I turned to a well-designed crafts-woman and resumed my inquiries. "Why do so many of your members confine their activities to crafts that have been successfully industrialized?" I asked. "The studio potter cannot make a tea or dinner service to compete in price or quality with the factory product; the furniture craftsman makes wonderful pieces, but they are so hopelessly expensive. Why don't you tackle wrought iron,

inn-signs, canal barges, gravestones, toys, tradesmen's signs . . .?"

"But we do," she said, vehemently—"we *do*. The trouble is that everything we produce sells like hot cakes. What you see here is hardly representative."

I found the furniture, engraved glass, pottery, textiles and calligraphy extremely satisfying. In design they were all markedly traditional, offering no concession to the fashions of the moment or to the idiom of machine art. (I had hoped, frankly, to catch the Centre out on this point.)

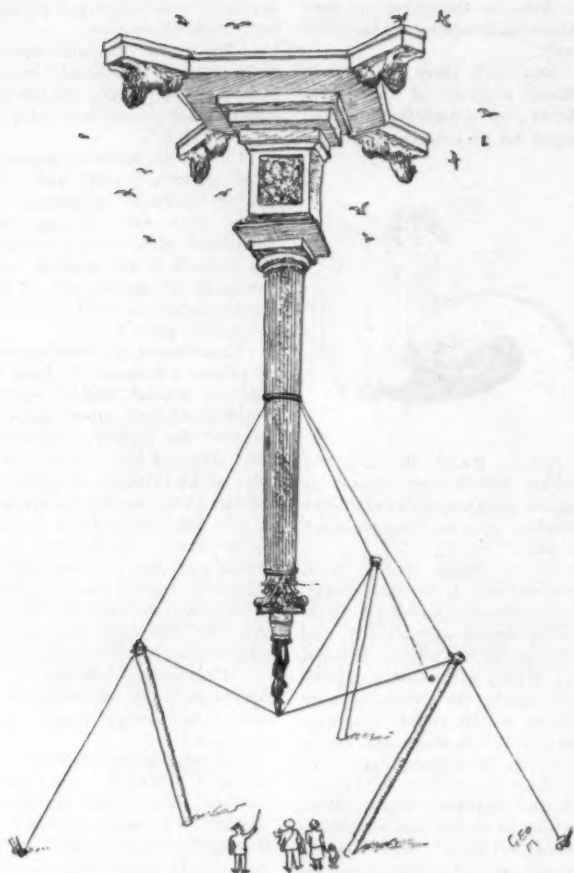
In particular, and I will mention no names, I admired the furniture with its unusual elegance, precise workmanship and superb finish. I awarded the pottery a firm beta plus, though I feel that the studio boys might extend their palette of ceramic glazes beyond the compass of gravy-browning, brick red and cement grey. The textiles . . . I couldn't get near. A hokinson of American matrons (to coin a noun of assembly) screened the exhibits and left me only the running commentary.

"Real smart," said one stately Bostonian; "it's got vitality and a sort of uncluttered beauty, don't you think?"

"I certainly do," said her companion. "What's the price? Really? How's that in dollars? 'Sakes! Why can't we have one of these Centres at home?"

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD





*"Of course we shall put it back after the Festival is over."*

### A LOSING BATTLE

ON a bed of screwed-up paper I placed seven strips of wood in a prearranged pattern, and at each intersection I placed a lump of coal. Over the whole I sprinkled a teaspoonful of sugar. I applied a match to the paper, and sat back on my heels.

The paper flared up excitedly, the trellis-work of wood sagged in the middle, and the lumps of coal fell through into a hole. A thin spiral of blue smoke curled out into the room, and stopped abruptly.

The first round was over.

Satisfied that everything so far was going according to expectations, I fished out the strips of wood (blackened, but still serviceable) and the lumps of coal. I then borrowed one of Lucy's firelighters from the kitchenette, made a nest for it in the cinders, and surrounded it cunningly with coal, in the form of a pyramid or cairn. The strips of wood I stuck upright into crevices.

Having made certain that it was now quite impossible to reach the

firelighter with a match, I removed a lump of coal from the foundations. It proved to be the corner-stone. The whole thing collapsed in a pitiful heap, and I nodded to myself.

That was the second round.

Whistling a slow, deliberate tune, I rebuilt my cairn, not quite so tidily, leaving a tunnelled entrance in the front. Up this I pushed lighted matches. At the fourth match a tongue of flame darted venomously back at me down the tunnel. I sucked my finger, and it tasted of burnt paper and paraffin.

I threw in the bits of wood any old how, added two teaspoonsful of sugar, and reached grimly for the shovel. This I balanced on the top bar, with the tip of the handle resting against the bottom of the cowl. I then stretched a large sheet of newspaper across the hole, and if it had not been for the shovel it would certainly have vanished up the chimney. I unwound it from the shovel, and folded its top edge over the mantelpiece, clamping it down with a glass ash-tray. Arrested in a stooping posture, I paused to read a news-item, with my head turned upside-down and one hand on a woolly vest which I had left to air in the fireplace the night before.

As I wiped my hands absently on this garment I noticed that only a thin layer of slack remained in the coal bucket. I picked it up and went clanking down to the cellar. Lucy popped out as I reached her floor, and asked if I would be a love and fill hers, and while I was down there would I just pop this shilling in her gas?

I filled the buckets (by hand), and pushed the shilling into her electric by mistake.

Disentangling a cobweb from my hair, I took out my last shilling and banged it into her gas.

I was very calm.

I got back to the flatlet in time to observe that the newspaper had disappeared, the ash-tray had fallen off the mantelpiece and cracked a tile, and the handle of the shovel was blazing merrily in the grate.

I was not in the least surprised.

I salvaged the shovel, and blew out the handle. One corner of a

lump of coal, which had somehow managed to get warm, turned from a dull orange to a dark grey, and gave a spiteful creak.

That pretty well finished round three.

I drummed my fingers for a few moments in the ash on the mantelpiece, and then I switched on the electric fire, and went decisively to the kitchenette.

I returned in due course with a cup of coffee, and settled down in the armchair to thaw myself out over the leader page. As I dipped my spoon into the sugar bowl three things occurred to me simultaneously: the leader page was spread about the hearth rug in flimsy black flakes; my electric fire had just gone out; and there was no more sugar.

ALEX ATKINSON

## SNOW BIRD

WHITE parakeet,  
Your frame is the freak of a bough  
Bent to the shape of a bird;  
Your feathers are frozen snow,  
And your beak  
Is the frosted bud  
At the tip of the twig.

Your attributes  
From the drifts of dreaming are  
spun.  
Snow bird you are! Your eyes  
Freeze the white heart of the sun.  
And his breath /  
In your icy claws  
Is stiffened in death.

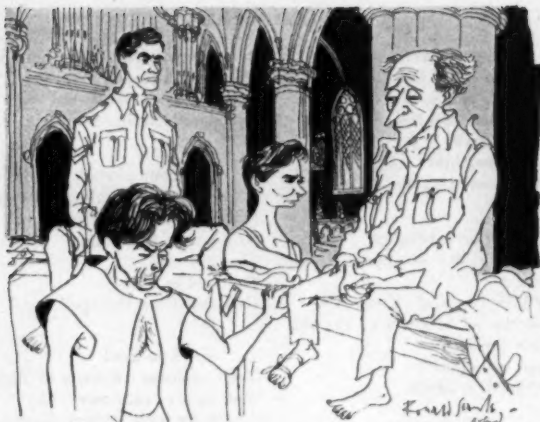
Immaculate!  
You cry to a forest of sleep.  
Your voice has no passion, no joys.

But the twittering sparrows cheep  
Too close where you perch,  
And a miracle flies  
At their fluttering touch.

Your plumes  
Splinter: and sparkling diamonds  
Scatter a million facets  
Brilliant as flying suns.  
You are real—  
Shivered in bits—  
Released from the spell.

You live!  
Your stillness awakens in flight.  
You resolve into snow,  
Gleaming with crystal delight.  
And your tongue  
Curls in the bud,  
Melting in song.





[A Sleep of Prisoners]

## Uncertainty

Cpt. Joseph Adams—MR. STANLEY BAKER; Pte. David King—MR. LEONARD WHITE; Pte. Peter Able—MR. DENHOLM ELLIOTT; Pte. Tim Meadows—MR. HUGH PRYSE

## AT THE PLAY

*A Sleep of Prisoners* (CHURCH OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN, OXFORD)  
Variety (PRINCE OF WALES)



URING the Festival Mr. CHRISTOPHER FRY's new play, *A Sleep of Prisoners*, will be staged in St. Thomas's, Regent Street, where it comes on shortly. I saw it in the church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, which Mr. MICHAEL MACOWAN, with a little straw, a few old packing-cases and some clever lighting transformed into a timeless place of exciting light and shadow. The play has only four characters, modern prisoners-of-war, dead-beat and quartered in a church. After a fight in which the aggressive member of the party nearly kills a gentle, jesting youth, they go to sleep, and in their dreams act incidents from the Old Testament that their relationship suggests to each of them: Cain and Abel, with Adam and the Voice of God; David and Absalom, with Joab and a messenger; Abraham and Isaac, with the Angel and the old donkey-man; and finally Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego in the fiery furnace.

With the programme is supplied a crib to the story; that this should

be needed, as indeed it is, seems to me a weakness. The incidents themselves are effective, the last two being exceptionally dramatic; separately they are clear enough, but where I was confused (and still am) was in their common denominator and its implications. Mr. FRY tells us that the play "is mainly concerned with the problem of conflict between men." What comes out of the conflict between these particular men? Fear, on a knife-edge with courage? Love, near hatred? Violence that reversed is gentleness? Is there a less simple message in this imaginative, sometimes moving play? I don't know. The author leaves us guessing, as I don't think an author should. Nor, unless they brought out a major point I have missed, do I think the complications justified.

The verse is not so immediately intoxicating as much that Mr. FRY has written, but it contains lovely passages, and from the eldest prisoner, a wise old peasant, come charming flights of fancy that are pure Fry. The production is memorably good. Working in

black-and-white, with only an occasional splash of vivid colour, Mr. MACOWAN wonderfully captures the feeling of dreams. Silhouettes on the arches; startling silences; a cracked bell and the loud ticking of a clock; sudden shouting from a dark aisle; and running through it all, merging the episodes, the casual byplay of tired men. Undaunted by bad acoustics, an excellent cast beautifully chiselled out the four contrasted characters. Mr. DENHOLM ELLIOTT, the youth; Mr. LEONARD WHITE, the go-getter; Mr. HUGH PRYSE, the old philosopher; Mr. STANLEY BAKER, the reliable corporal—I can't say which is the best of this altogether admirable quartet.

I'm afraid I was a little disappointed with Mr. BOB HOPE. Resembling a prosperous stockbroker, he came on the stage, swinging his well-tailored arms like Indian clubs, as if he owned it; in spite of his distressing habit of chewing gum while he talks, he radiated charm; the wisecracks were neat, the delivery was masterly; Miss MARILYN MAXWELL and Mr. JERRY DESMONDE proved skilful accomplices; and yet I felt the whole act to be too mechanically perfect. Perhaps we have heard too much about those gag-writers.

## Recommended

*Kiss Me, Kate* (Coliseum) is the best of the musicals and uses Shakespeare ingeniously. *To Dorothy, A Son* (Garrick) is pleasant nonsense. And *Count Your Blessings* (Wyndham's) is our third tip for a thoughtless evening.

ERIC KEOWN



The Confidence Man  
MR. BOB HOPE

## AT THE OPERA

*The Pilgrim's Progress*  
(COVENT GARDEN)

OUR greatest living composer, RALPH VAUGHAN WILLIAMS, has crowned his life's work by setting to music one of the treasures of English literature, John Bunyan's allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*. One of the episodes of this work, "The Shepherds of the Delectable Mountains," has been familiar to us for some long time; but now that we have seen the whole we perceive that it is towards *The Pilgrim's Progress* that all VAUGHAN WILLIAMS' other works have been leading, and that it epitomizes them all. The Symphonies (especially the fifth, which contains quotations from this great "work in progress"), the "Tallis Fantasia" and all the rest are episodes in a pilgrimage which has been told in music over the years, and which began nearly four-score years ago.

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS describes his setting of *The Pilgrim's Progress* as a Morality in a Prologue, Four Acts and an Epilogue. It begins with a short orchestral introduction based on the hymn-tune "York," played on solemn brass; the curtain then rises to reveal John Bunyan in prison writing by night the last words of his work: "So I awoke, and behold it was a Dream." He gathers up the pages, and turns back to the beginning: "As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where there was a Den, and I laid me down in that place to sleep; and, as I slept, I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back . . ." As he speaks, *Pilgrim* is seen, looking this way and that and lamenting "What shall I do?" *Evangelist* appears, bringing with him a message of Heaven in radiant harmonies that recall the "Tallis Fantasia." He directs *Pilgrim* to follow the shining light to the gate that leads to Eternal Life.

In the next episode *Three Shining Ones* take *Pilgrim's* burden

from his back, and cast it into the Sepulchre; and after he has been sealed on the forehead with the Holy Spirit a white robe is put upon him, and he is received into the House Beautiful. Next morning he is armed for the dangers of the way and sent forth upon his pilgrimage; he reaches the Valley of Humiliation, where he puts the Doleful Creatures to rout and slays *Apollyon*; he goes thence through Vanity Fair, where everything save the Truth is for sale, and is thrown into prison for his denunciation of Beelzebub, the prince of the place. From the depths of despair he remembers the Key of Promise in his bosom, and with it opens the prison doors. He continues on his way and meets the joyful *Woodcutter's Boy* and *Mr. and Madam By-Ends*, who prefer their own comfortable and profitable religion to his stern one. He journeys on to the Delectable Mountains, whence can be seen the Celestial City, and remains with the *Shepherds* till summoned by a *Celestial Messenger*, bearing the Arrow of Death, to prepare to cross the River. He is anointed by the *Shepherds* and passes through the deep waters. A trumpet sounds, darkness is changed to light, and *Pilgrim* climbs the stair to the Golden Gates while a choir of Angels sings in triumph.

The Dream is ended. JOHN

Bunyan comes forward, a Book in his hand, and commends it to the audience, bidding them

"... come hither

And lay my book, thy head  
and heart together."

A great deal of thought has gone into the Covent Garden presentation of this noble work. None the less one feels that it is out of place in a theatre. *The Pilgrim's Progress* is great literature, and VAUGHAN WILLIAMS has allied to it music in his own luminous modal idiom that sheds a mystical radiance over Bunyan's allegory and brings new life and import to his spiritual message. It is a profession of faith, and needs the devotional atmosphere of a great cathedral for its full force to be realized.

The performance at Covent Garden is capably directed by a young conductor, LEONARD HANCOCK. The producer is NEVILLE COGHILL. The singers, chief among whom is ARNOLD MATTERS as *Pilgrim*, are sincere and adequate, but no more, though the beautiful and reverent performance of the three *Shepherds*, JOHN CAMEBON, WILLIAM McALPINE and NORMAN WALKER, makes a deep impression.

The composer, in a characteristic little speech from the stage on the first night, remarked: "Someone asked me who wrote the libretto . . ." D. C. B.





## IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT



Monday, April 30th

Even the Mother of Parliaments likes to "Spring clean" now and then, and, after the turmoil of last week's resignations from the Government, and the dust that was blown off various skeletons-in-the-cupboard in the process, a little tidying up was indicated.

And very neatly it was done, too. The Courts-Martial Appeals Bill, which permits appeals to the civil courts from the decisions of courts-martial, was, at long last, completed. It had been with the House so long that Mr. MANNINGHAM-BULLER, its chief Opposition critic, and Mr. JOHN WHEATLEY, the Lord Advocate, seemed almost on the verge of tears as they bade it farewell. Both expressed the hope that, Parliament having passed it, it would need to be but little used by members of the Forces.

Before that, Mr. BRENDAN BRACKEN, who speaks all too rarely, had had a tiny field-day of his own in criticizing a Bill to increase the borrowing powers of the National Coal Board. He had a few words to say on the subject of borrowing generally and by nationalized industries in particular, and was not mollified to any notable extent by the Minister of Fuel's announcement that it was proposed to increase the borrowing powers only from £150 millions to £300 millions. He breezily recommended a Ministerial interrupter—"in the long period of enforced retirement shortly to come to him"—to study economics. And so on, until the Bill was given a Second Reading without a division, none of the twenty-nine Members present offering any objection.

Before the debates began, Mr. STRAUSS, Minister of Supply, had made a grave statement about the shortage of steel, stocks of which, he said, were at a dangerously low level. This was heard in silence, for all recognized it as a curtain-raiser

to to-morrow's debate on raw material shortages generally. The most definite point that emerged from the long questioning of the Minister was that something is to be done to salvage the hundreds of miles of tramway line now buried in our streets and "redundant" since so many trams have retired. But it seems that, even with that increment of scrap, the shortage is grave.

Tuesday, May 1st

The Lobby joke about to-day's proceedings was to refer to them as "The Festival of Bevan," since the Opposition's motion, on which the debate was to

House of Commons  
Lucky Thirteen!



### Impressions of Parliamentarians

The Archbishop of Canterbury

be based, was an interpretation of Mr. BEVAN's resignation speech. And the House was crowded well in advance of the scheduled time. Early enough, in fact, to hear a long statement by Mr. MORRISON on the action of the Persian Parliament in "nationalizing" the oil concessions held in Persia by a British company. Mr. M. made it clear that, however much he might approve nationalization "in principle," he did not approve unilateral action to wipe out an agreement made in good faith. Manfully avoiding any temptation to draw invidious parallels, the Opposition left it at that.

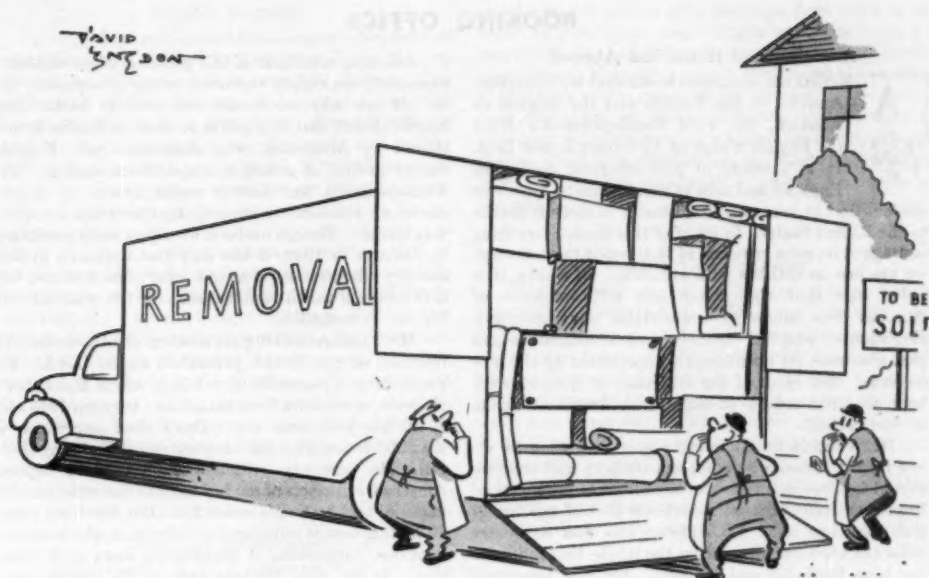
The spotlight moved for a moment to Mr. BEVAN, carefully skirting the unfamiliar backbenches, as he made his way quietly

to an obscure seat. But then Mr. ANTHONY EDEN took, and held, the attention. He was moving a motion inviting the House to express "anxiety" that the rearmament programme was based on production estimates apparently not accepted by the Ministers most concerned.

Disregarding the classic warning about the setting of snares in the sight of the intended victim, Mr. EDEN made great play with a series of Press cuttings, some with anything but flattering descriptions of Members of the Cabinet. But, since they were made by members of the Government Party, he said innocently, he had to accept them as authentic. The facts did seem to show that the Government had moved too slowly and too late in the matter of raw material stockpiling—they had, in fact, "shown a complete and absolute lack of foresight."

Mr. BEVAN had been hurrying in and out—to the acute discomfort of the owners of the knees he brushed against. As Mr. STRAUSS, for the Government, began to reply to Mr. EDEN, Mr. HAROLD WILSON, the other resigned Minister, entered, and the two listened silently. The Minister's speech was too closely read, too expressionless, to be effective, but it put over the case that there was no need for pessimism and that the resigning Ministers' statements had "given a false impression" of the raw materials situation. As Mr. B. jerked forward angrily, Mr. S. added hastily that he was sure it was "unintentional."

The Minister read his peroration, to the effect that Britain's leadership in the world would be gravely weakened if Mr. ATTLEE was replaced by Mr. CHURCHILL as Prime Minister. This was received with a wave of laughter from the public gallery which spread to the Floor and became a tornado, completely drowning the Ministerial voice. Then the House almost entirely emptied. A few minutes later, the indicators flashed the name



"Fred! For heaven's sake where's Fred?"

"Mr. A. BEVAN" and there was a helter-skelter rush to the Chamber again, with Mr. CHURCHILL well in the running.

But, fleet of foot as they were, most of the Members arrived in the Chamber just in time to see Mr. BEVAN sitting down again, having spoken for two and a half minutes. He merely said he would save his really important speech for some occasion worthy of it—not this piece of old-fashioned political jousting staged by the wicked, scheming Tories. He added that he hoped he would be proved wrong in taking a pessimistic view of things, for he would rather see people at work than be able to say "I told you so!"

Mr. CLEMENT DAVIES, for the Liberals, announced the Party's decision to abstain from voting, and then the House emptied again until Mr. ROBERT HUDSON, armed with many cuttings and reference books, wound up for the Opposition. He pointed out that the pessimism of Mr. BEVAN and Mr. WILSON about our raw material supplies was

so contrary to the optimism of the Cabinet that *somebody* had to be wrong—and he thought it might be the Cabinet, for it had been wrong at every critical period.

Mr. SHINWELL made the final speech for the Government, in which he said that "anyone" who tried to persuade the country that freedom could be defended without sacrifice was deceiving himself and doing the nation a great disservice. Mr. BEVAN showed signs of hurling a swift retort, but refrained.

When the vote was taken, the Government polled 305, the Opposition 292—a majority of 13. Mr. BEVAN and Mr. WILSON surrounded by a bodyguard of supporters, voted for the Government—and against the doubtful and anxious views they had expressed a short time ago in their resignation speeches. They left the House to the mocking laughter of Mr. CHURCHILL, who made sweeping exorcising gestures over the Government Front Bench, and said things which did not reach the Press Gallery.

Wednesday, May 2nd

Mr. SHINWELL made a long statement about the fighting in

Korea, telling the story of the gallant stand of British troops against overwhelming odds and foretelling a "new and possibly critical phase" in the fighting. And he gave a casualty list which left the House sad.

It was a pity that, a few moments later, he should leave the Chamber amid furious cries of "Resign!" after he had evaded questions about the alleged supply, by Government consent, of important raw materials to Communist China. Mr. Speaker had to intervene, with unwonted sternness, before order could be restored.

Then the House passed to the committee stage of the Bill to impose charges for dentures and spectacles, under the Health Service—the proposal which set the spark to the Governmental gunpowder a few weeks ago.

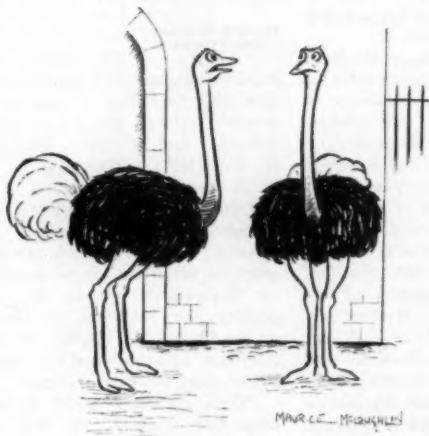
Mr. BEVAN was not there.

## BOOKING OFFICE

## Americans at Home and Abroad

**A**MONG the numerous books that try to explain America to the English and the English to America, Mr. Fred Vanderschmidt's *What the English Think of Us* covers a new field. It is a study of anti-American feeling in England and tries to drive home to American readers that at least one Englishman in three is hostile to the United States. In proof of this thesis everything is dragged in, even criticism of Hollywood films, though we are just as ruthless with our own. Of course, it is quite true that the power and self-confidence of America does arouse understandable envy in many Englishmen, who feel that our present difficulties and past greatness are insufficiently appreciated by the new colossus. But most of the criticisms of America over here are mild echoes of those that Americans make of themselves.

Mr. Vanderschmidt is right in saying that we do not regard America as a foreign country and that we should hesitate to make the same kind of criticisms of France or Italy, because America is part of the family and they are not. No country has had a greater influence upon our life, and, on the whole, that influence has been fertilizing and welcome. We like Americans and often feel a strange nostalgia for the country we have never visited. That does not mean that we accept American leadership in every department of life.



"The food hasn't been the same  
since they nationalized steel."

American criticisms of this country, often violently expressed, are rightly reprinted in our newspapers; we do not see why we should not criticize back. The English belief that it is polite to swallow insults is not shared by Americans, who sometimes take English silence in face of attack as supercilious disdain. Mr. Vanderschmidt has done a useful service to Anglo-American relations by showing that criticism is a two-way traffic. Though his book was apparently published in America in 1948, it has only just appeared in this country; the time-lag destroys some of its interest, but it is still well worth reading, both for the material and for the presentation.

Mr. Vanderschmidt puts much of the blame for bad relations on the British journalists in the U.S.A. He particularly censures Mr. Don Iddon, whose *Don Iddon's America*, a selection from his column between 1945 and 1949, has just come out. One's chief impression is that Mr. Iddon likes the country and finds living there fun. He certainly criticizes America and reports American criticisms of us; but most of the unfavourable material that he prints comes from the American press. If quoting hostile criticism exacerbates Anglo-American relations, suppressing it undermines them in the long run. As Sir Alan Herbert says in his Introduction, "Much better frank talk than wicked whispers and festering suspicion."

On one point Mr. Iddon's picture is unbalanced. He is obsessed by the wasting of food while England famishes; in fact, the United States, by grants of food and individual food parcels, has shown very generous realization of conditions in England. The arrangement of the book makes it rather hard to follow, as entries are placed in chronological order under subjects. The political and economic part comes at the beginning, and the entries get more gossipy and entertaining as the book goes on.

Americans have a traditional association with France, and to many Paris is more attractive to live in than London. Mr. Elliot Paul's *Springtime in Paris* describes his return after the war to the quartier on the South Bank where he had lived years before and which he described in "A Narrow Street." He manages his complicated scene admirably, blending straight political and social reporting, character sketches, interwoven anecdotes and periodic outbursts of Fielding-esque incident, wild and gusty. The dividing line between fiction and embroidered reminiscence is not made clear.

He laughs with the French but never at them. He is obviously a very intelligent man, and what in another writer might be sentimental and patronizing becomes a hard, masculine sympathy and penetrating comprehension which any nation might be proud to have aroused. He does not hesitate to castigate, while he understands, French inefficiency. It is unlikely that any Parisian Vanderschmidt will squeal that America is ungrateful for the cultural gifts she has received from France.

R. G. G. PRICE

### Fallible Kremlin

It's comforting to be told by an expert—Mr. Edward Crankshaw was attached for two years to our Military Mission to Moscow, and is now the Russian Correspondent of *The Observer*—that a major war with Russia is unlikely for a generation. Everyone should read his *Russia by Daylight*, an admirably cool estimation of the Kremlin's predicament. Unfashionably he insists that Russia and Communism are different forces, only coinciding by accident, and that what we are up against is Russia. On this point Tito, a Communist, has called the bluff. Mr. Crankshaw considers that, if Russia were as ready for war as many people fear, Yugoslavia would already have suffered military intervention. Low production, shortage of food, vast uneasy frontiers, unwilling satellites, the American potential, Stalin's withering divinity, and an army unsuited to a blitzkrieg are only some of the factors on the side of peace. Citing ineptitude and opportunism, he argues against the existence of a grand Bolshevik design, but the last thing he does is to minimize our task ahead.

E. O. D. K.

### Disguised Melodrama

*Knight's Gambit* is an unexpected book to come from a Nobel literary prizewinner. Except for the title piece, which might be another section of "Intruder in the Dust," Mr. William Faulkner's six stories of Gavin Stevens the County Attorney are less tortuously and diffusely written than that exasperating novel; but although very readable, they are also much less distinguished considered as stories. Nearly all depend fundamentally on the sort of artificial puzzle that forms the basis of the cheap detective episode ("Can you spot the murderer's mistake?"), and neither the Southern local colour nor the hypnotic Faulkner style can disguise this for long. At first one may be taken in; expecting Literature, one cannot believe that the detail unobtrusively planted in the early scenes will really prove the key to the story, to be recalled in the dénouement by Gavin Stevens in his character of shrewd detective. But once the formula has been identified it is distracting; like the fact that so many sentences begin with "Because."

R. M.

### Crime and Punishment

Lord Templewood, long known as an opponent of capital punishment, now puts his case in *The Shadow of the Gallows*. He takes the emotional view, that capital punishment is brutal and "lowers the social standard that should be universally respected for every human life," and only adduces as a subsidiary point the logical argument that execution does not allow for the correction of an error, which to many seems the chief objection. He dwells disproportionately on horrors now historical and irrelevant, and advances some obviously weak pleas; if, for example,

murderers are seldom of a recidivist type, what is the value of a sentence that "leaves an opportunity for repentance"? As for the non-deterrent effect of capital punishment, if hanging won't deter a murderer, then a fortiori a prison sentence hardly will. The fact is that one must go deeper into the whole ethics of punishment before making up one's mind on this one factor. Lord Templewood has not made out a strong case; but he has produced a potent stimulant to thought.

B. A. Y.

### Pacifist Consequences

The effects of war on an Italian peasant family (two members of which are killed), on a love affair, and on the conscience of an English Army deserter, are the staple ingredients of *The House and the Fort*. Mr. Charles Humana undoubtedly has an axe to grind; yet his approach to a representative peasant family—the young Anna who falls foul of the local policeman, the old mother Maria (a somewhat stock character), the returned prodigal Paolo, and the cowardly Antonio—is a model of sympathy and understanding. He has done that rare thing which few Italian novelists, and no English novelists, have yet done satisfactorily—



"... and I'll be glad when my wife gets back."

portrayed the mental workings and emotional bias of an average Italian peasant. The people are as alive as passers-by in a street in Rimini. The stifling *canai*, the long, lazy, over-hot Italian afternoons in the heart of the country with the hilly countryside and the local café as the only outlet, are also well conveyed. What is difficult, however, is Mr. Humana's often too obvious desire (which expresses itself in the over-use of symbols such as frowning guns and Army captains) to prove conclusively that war is the root of all evil. This novel does not need it, and in drawing attention to his purpose Mr. Humana has made Roberto's desertion less justifiable, perhaps, than war itself. R. K.

### Ad Lib

Gusto, a rather old-fashioned quality perhaps, is the keynote of Mr. J. B. Priestley's very topical novel *Festival at Farbridge*, the story of how a small country town came to take its part in the Festival of Britain. Commodore Tribe, what his creator would call "a type" with a doubtful past, is the moving spirit in it all, with fierce, pretty Laura and giant, gentle Theodore as his assistants in Machiavellian scheming and double-crossing as well as more obvious activities. Food and drink, mirth and love-making are laid on *ad lib*, promising marriages are scattered round like bouquets, and the whole atmosphere is so gay, bustling and English, of a rather Dickensian vintage, that few readers will

fail to be encouraged by it. Mr. Priestley has created dozens of characters, some brilliantly done; but he gives them—and us—no more than a glance at the shadows of life—instead, in hottest sunshine and glitter of fireworks they fleet the time merrily, for our entertainment. B. E. S.

### The Perennial

The "darling psychological oddities," fifteen-year-old twins of an actress, make useful publicity gadgets for their mother until they meet, at a cocktail party in America, a young man (rather drunk) who tells them about his old Nannie—"You could go to her for anything, anytime. She was always there." So far, so slightly nauseating, but any readers who deduce from the first dip into Miss Mary Dunstan's book—*She Was Always There*—that they are to be plunged into a psychological morass will be surprised and enchanted when the twins meet the Nannie. She is a brisk, kind and astringent character who describes their self-probings as silly talk. Through her, they discover the comforts of childhood and (just as important) the responsibilities of manhood and womanhood. The book has its brilliant patches and is blessedly unsentimental. B. E. B.

### Books Reviewed Above

- What the English Think of Us.* Fred Vanderschmidt. (Quality Press, 12/6)  
*Don Iddon's America.* Don Iddon. (Falcon Press, 12/6)  
*Springtime in Paris.* Elliot Paul. (Crosset Press, 12/6)  
*Russia by Daylight.* Edward Cranishaw. (Michael Joseph, 15/-)  
*Knight's Gambit.* William Faulkner. (Chatto and Windus, 9/6)  
*The Shadow of the Gallows.* Viscount Templewood. (Gollancz, 8/6)  
*The House and the Fort.* Charles Humana. (Hogarth Press, 9/6)  
*Festival at Farbridge.* J. B. Priestley. (Heinemann, 15/-)  
*She Was Always There.* Mary Dunstan. (Heinemann, 10/6)

### Other Recommended Books

- Indian Dancing.* Ram Gopal and Serozh Dadachanji. (Phoenix House, 16/-) Erudite historical and critical work with magnificent illustrations. Slim in form and concentrated in substance. Interesting comparative chapter on Western dancing.  
*Single Blessedness.* Francis Scarfe. (Heinemann, 9/6) Short, inconsequent, witty fantasy about a schoolmaster. Amusing, but not for the literal-minded.  
*The Fascination of Railways.* Roger Lloyd. (Allen and Unwin, 12/6). Delightful book by a fanatically keen train-watching clergyman, whose idea of heaven is Crewe Station at midnight. Extremely interesting about railway organization, e.g. how they get the fish vans back to Aberdeen from Weymouth. Well written and illustrated.  
*Night and Green Ginger.* David Lockwood. (Hodder and Stoughton, 9/6) High-spirited and very mysterious story about life in Hull, with an exuberance of imagination that, while sometimes causing over-complication of plot, produces scene after scene of real originality. Having learned much from Mr. Chandler, the author is now shaking free from his influence.  
*Entertaining at Home.* Philip and Katharine Harben. (Bodley Head, 8/6) How to prepare six simple and six festive meals; how to choose and serve wine, how to drink, and how to get sober. All very lucid, useful and entertaining.  
*The M.C.C. Diary.* (Naldrett Press, for the Marylebone Cricket Club, 4/-) The first vest-pocket diary (May–April) for the cricket fan. Full of statistical delights, facts and fixtures, sunrise and sunset tables and so on. Invaluable.



## SELF-EXPRESSION FOR THE SEDENTARY

THE sedentary worker needs something manual and creative to do at week-ends to prevent him from becoming neurotic. Fuses, curtain rails and a little painting keep him going for a time, but one day he wants to be a real carpenter, and buys a book on it. Too often he gets no farther. I don't blame him; the carpenter's bench he is expected to make before he starts is enough to put anyone off. It is massive, beautifully planed and fits together in a frighteningly difficult way. It is full of concealed stops and vices and contains as much timber as a post-war house. But of course he doesn't need one. Any old table will do, or even a new one with newspaper on top. And he needn't bother to read the rest of the book either. The more he works out of his head the more channels his creative urge will have to flow along. Given a few essentials and enough dash in his approach, he will find he can decide what to make and how to do it while actually engaged on the job.

But first he must find somewhere to work. The book would suggest an empty, well-lighted room or a large shed with ample storage space. The sedentary carpenter has no empty room and his shed contains deck-chairs and tables, jam jars, apples, prams and push-chairs, ladders, toy motor cars, lawn mowers and, except in the winter, coal. If he can get inside he will find that it has no window and the roof leaks. The adaptation of this to a work place is too large a problem for his tender creative urge and he should not face it. The proper place for sedentary carpentry is the sitting-room. Here are light and warmth, both essentials; a comfortable chair for rest when the creative urge is temporarily at a loss, or the thumb temporarily sore. Here also criticism, necessary at times during creative work, will be immediately at hand.

Having decided on the place, and determined also to keep the idea to himself for the time being, the sedentary carpenter has the problem of materials—that is, of



*"How about this one then, 'Sumer is icumen in, blode sing cuccu'?"*

wood. He isn't allowed to buy soft wood and it is unfair to ask a beginner to start on hard wood. But he needn't worry, there are plenty of ways round this one. For instance, I buy my wood from a wine merchant. I find one some distance away, choose from time to time bottles of coloured liquid (which incidentally is itself quite good for the creative urge), and get him to send them by train. They turn up a month later in a lovely wooden case, which is perfect for carpentry. Not only are the component pieces square at the edges

and of uniform thickness (there are two chapters in the carpentry book on how to get wood into this state) but there are nails as well. Finding nails otherwise is difficult; the natural source of supply in the walls of the house soon dries up and buying them is not to be thought of. They come from ironmongers, and a visit to this sort of shop is the surest way to repress the creative urge and substitute an inferiority complex.

Even if the sedentary carpenter's thirst cannot keep pace with his creative urge, there is

plenty of wood right under his nose. Backs of bookcases often yield to pressure; unwanted pictures may be dropped and provide, besides the frame, thin bendy stuff from the back which is otherwise difficult to get. It is surprising, until they are approached in a creative mood, how many things are made of wood and how many bits of them are removable without showing from the front.

Tools should be few and simple. A hammer, with a thing on the back for demolition, saw, tube of glue, penknife and sandpaper. A plane should never be used for smoothing wood—it usually does the opposite and will probably lead in any case to expulsion from the chosen place of work. Outdoor tools, such as choppers and mauls, should be avoided as not being inherently creative.

When he has got as far as this the sedentary carpenter should choose a Saturday afternoon when his wife has taken the children for a walk, and START. Any further suggestion on my part would interfere with the essential creative flame itself, and this I shall not dare to do.

## THE CENTURION RETURNS

ONCE, many winters past—I can't remember  
The total of them; it was long ago—  
I led my hundred northward in December  
Towards the camp at Deva through the snow.

We were the Legion; all the length of Watling  
Street we had marched; the cold was getting worse;  
Patches of unfamiliar white were mottling  
The leafless woodland and the umbered furze.

How far was Rome, and how remote the summers  
Which lay so warm upon our tideless sea!  
No sunlight gleamed to welcome us, newcomers  
To this unfriendly landscape by the Dee.

Yet, when spring came and carpeted with sorrel  
The woods in which wild hyacinths were blue,  
We walked abroad in peace; the Empire's quarrel  
Grew out of mind, and life began anew.

So where the beeches stood we saw Silvanus;  
We heard among the reeds the call of Pan;  
Our long-drawn exile ceased at last to pain us,  
And light-foot by the river's brink we ran.

Though eighteen hundred years in ordered passage  
Have lit Dee's waters with their countless dawns,  
The stone we graved that spring still bears its message:  
"The Twentieth Legion—To the Nymphs and Fauns."



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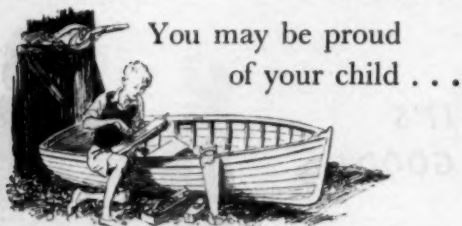


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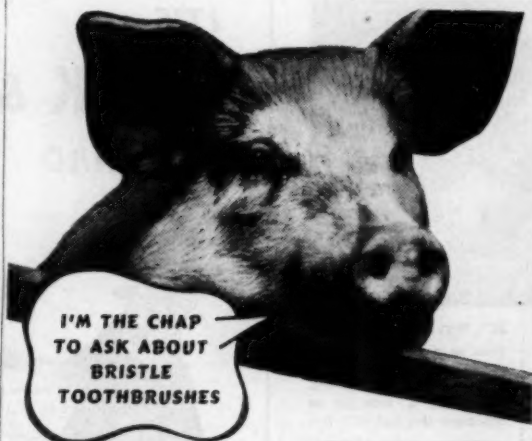
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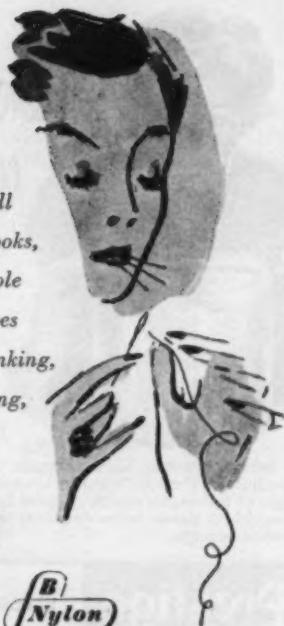
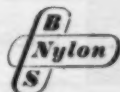
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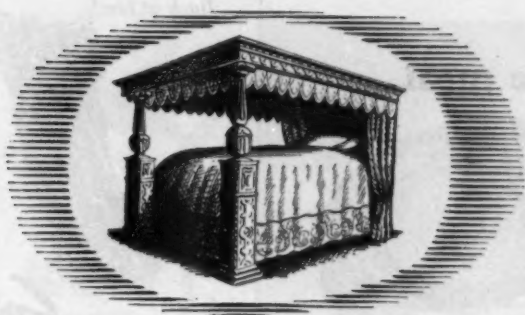


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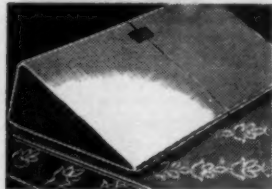
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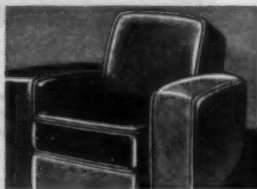
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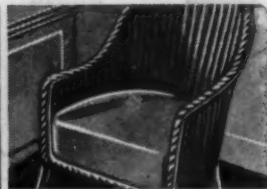
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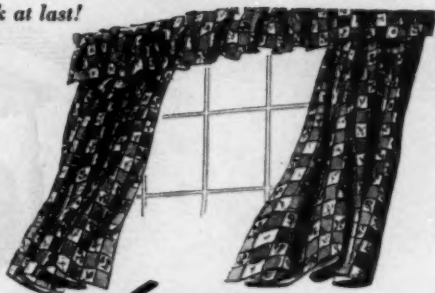
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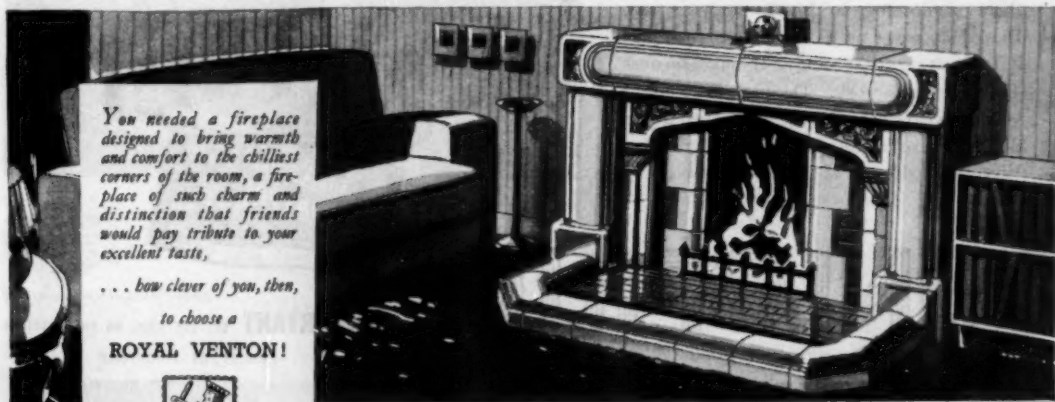
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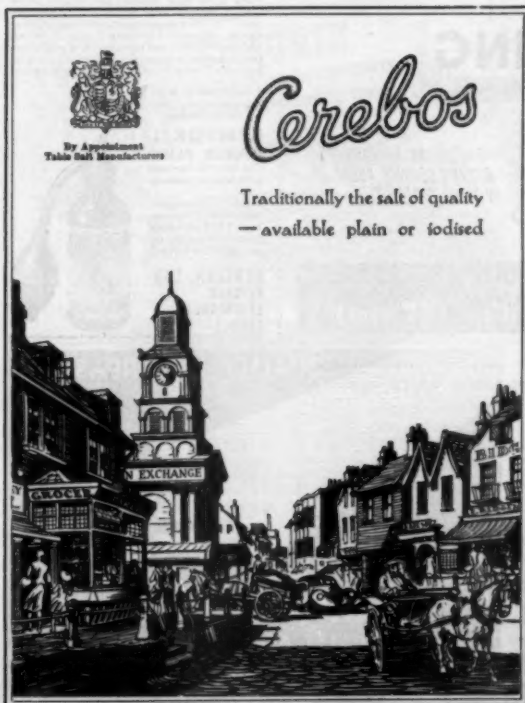
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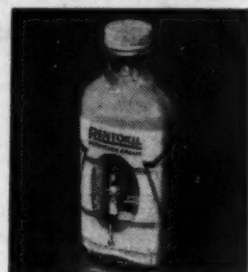
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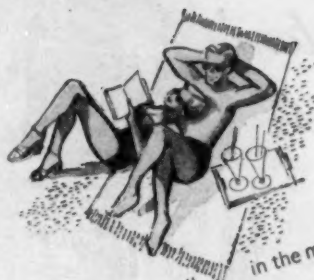
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